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[Every Hospital Corpsman Serving Today is the History of the Hospital Corps](#)

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By Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (SS/SW/FMF) Brad McIntire, deputy director, Hospital Corps



Performing our daily duties with honor, courage and commitment is the legacy of the Hospital Corps.

It is easy for me to stand here and rattle off the MoH's, Navy Crosses, Silver Stars, Purple Hearts....ships, clinics, Hospitals, buildings named after Hospital Corpsmen.

The sacrifices Hospital Corpsman have made serving, not only their country in general, but in most cases the direct action of coming to the aid of a fellow injured service member or sometimes even the enemy are well documented.

The history books tell the story of great war heroes, but the reality is most of them served in clinics and hospitals when they were tapped on the shoulder, and they went cautiously, but willingly, to continue their pledge of caring for our Nation's most precious commodity; it's citizens, it's sons and daughters, our fellow shipmates and service members.

Whether we pivot to the pacific, about face to the Atlantic, moonwalk to the moon, corner Canada....you get my point with the catch phrases. Hospital Corpsmen will be there at every turn of the page of history.

Sometimes doctors will be there, sometimes nurses, sometimes dentist or an MSC officer, but always there will be a Corpsman. The deployment environment doesn't matter, because we have served in all of them. The deployment platform doesn't matter, because we have deployed on all of them.

Every Hospital Corpsman serving today is the history of the Hospital Corps. Without Corpsman like us, we would not have our well-documented history. The essence of the Hospital Corps is in all of us. It is hard to imagine, but us performing our daily duties with honor, courage and commitment is the legacy of the Hospital Corps.

Our history books are filled with heroes, but what they leave out is those Sailors did daily duties the same as us. They did not join the Navy with ambitions of being the recipients of the Medal of Honor or having a ship named after them. These actions that deserve this type of recognition are a representation of a moment in time of their career, no doubt a very important moment but a moment none-the-less.

The essence of the Hospital Corps is in all of us, in what we do on a daily basis; what comes natural. It is also in the traditions we pass along to our reliefs. The unique thing about the military is we don't do things for personal fame or admiration.

I want you to think about all of the people that served the Navy since 1775 (that's a lot of people). History singles out very few names and even when it does, their specific actions are often forgotten. We don't do what we do to leave a legacy for ourselves. The only legacy we leave is the Navy itself.

This legacy is left by Sailors just like us serving in everyday, routine billets. Performing what seems like routine duties; however our duties are special because of our charge.

We are charged with caring for our Nation's and Navy's most precious resource, the people. These are the Sailors and Marines that breathe life into our organization. Our most junior Hospital Corpsman has the everyday ability to make a positive impact on the lives of those they come in contact with. This is a charge we should never take lightly. By the nature of our job, it is never routine.

Other ratings do not take an oath, and we do not take an oath because of a requirement to do so, we take an oath because we place an extremely high value on what we do...every day. It is a value that is woven into our moral fiber and a value that we pass on to every new Hospital Corpsman, a tradition, our legacy.

Our traditions of service with value and honor are what we must ensure are passed along to our Sailors. A tradition that was started long before 1898 and was only made stronger by the establishment of the Hospital Corps.